

Town of Boxborough Massachusetts



OFFICIAL WARRANT

FALL TOWN MEETING

Tuesday, October 14, 2025 – 7:00 PM
Wednesday, October 15, 2025 – 7:00 PM

Voter check-in begins at 6:30 PM

Boxboro Regency - Parade Room
242 Adams Place, Boxborough

Please bring this Warrant with you to the Fall Town Meeting

Free On-Site Child Care Available

October 14 & 15 · 6:30–9:00 PM

Please sign up using the QR code on page 4 of the warrant

**Adams Place
Driveway via 111**

Primary Parking Area

**Enter the parking lot
at your first left turn**

Enter Here

Parade Room

Overflow Parking

Overflow Parking

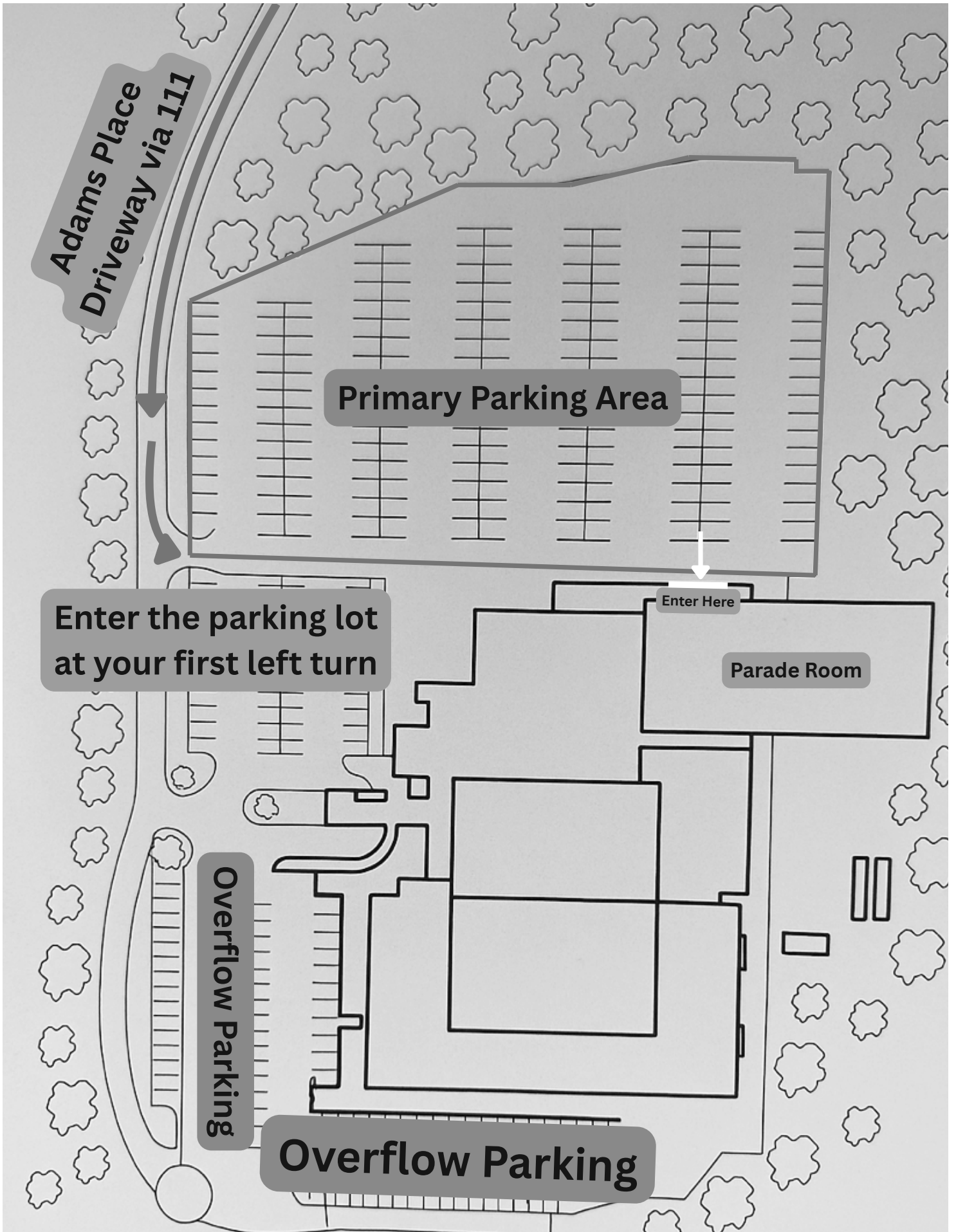


TABLE OF CONTENTS

FREE ON-SITE CHILD CARE DURING TOWN MEETING.....	4
COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS	5
ARTICLE 1 AMENDMENT TO CHANGE SECTION 4.1.3c UTILITY AND PUBLIC SERVICE USES AND ARTICLE 9.2 TERMS DEFINED OF THE TOWN OF BOXBOROUGH ZONING BYLAW	8
ARTICLE 2 AMENDMENT TO CHANGE SECTION 5.1.2 DIMENSIONAL SCHEDULE OF THE TOWN OF BOXBOROUGH ZONING BYLAW	12
ARTICLE 3 SENSE OF THE MEETING: UNDERSTANDING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCATION AND COST FOR BUILDING A NEW FIRE HOUSE	13
ARTICLE 4 SENSE OF THE MEETING: BUILDING A NEW FIRE HOUSE USING HIGH- LEVEL “GREEN CONSTRUCTION” STANDARDS	14
ARTICLE 5 MBTA COMMUNITIES OVERLAY DISTRICT AND DEFINITIONS	16
ARTICLE 6 AMENDMENT TO CHANGE SECTION 4 OF THE STONE WALLS BYLAW	22
ARTICLE 7 TO ESTABLISH AN APPOINTED BOARD OF ASSESSORS	23
ARTICLE 8 AMENDMENT TO GENERAL BYLAW - DATE OF ANNUAL TOWN MEETING AND ANNUAL TOWN ELECTION	24
TOWN MEETING - A GUIDE FOR RESIDENTS.....	26

FREE ON-SITE CHILD CARE DURING TOWN MEETING

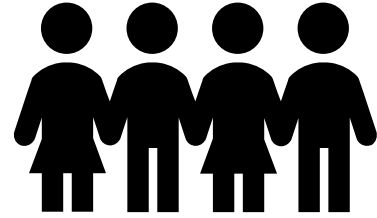
Child care will be provided at no cost on both nights of Town Meeting at the **Boxboro Regency**:

Tuesday, October 14

Wednesday, October 15

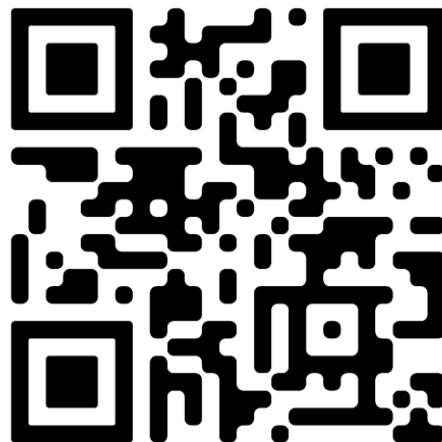
6:30 PM – 9:00 PM

Please register in advance so we can ensure sufficient staff and space for every child.



Details about the specific child care room will be provided at registration and posted on-site.

Sign Up: Scan the QR code below or visit www.boxborough-ma.gov.



COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Town Meeting Schedule

The Fall Annual Town Meeting will be conducted over the course of two evenings.

- **Night One** will begin with Articles 1–4. The intent is to complete these articles. If time allows, the Meeting may also take up Articles 6–8.
- **Night Two** will begin with **Article 5 (MBTA Communities Overlay District and Definitions)**. Article 5 will be the first matter taken up on the second evening regardless of the progress made on night one.

This schedule is provided to assist residents in planning their participation. While the pace of Town Meeting is not predictable, residents should note that **Article 5 will be considered at the outset of Night Two**.

Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

The Acton-Boxborough Regional School District is in the process of developing its next strategic plan. This plan will consider opportunities to reorganize schools and programs to improve services for students in a sustainable financial model for the communities. The school district invites members of the Boxborough community to learn about potential options and provide feedback about these options:

1. **Monday, October 27th** from 6:30-8:00 p.m., in the Blanchard Memorial School Gym. Target Audience: Boxborough Families & Residents
2. **Thursday, October 30th** from 6:30-8:00 p.m., Virtual (registration link to be posted about 2 weeks prior to the date). Target Audience: Acton & Boxborough Families & Residents

For more information, visit the district website at abschools.org or contact Peter Light, Superintendent of Schools at plight@abschools.org

Boxborough News: Our Town, Our News, Our Voices

Boxborough News is an independent, volunteer-run news project committed to neutral reporting of town news and information. We publish news articles, community stories, and information about local events each Friday on www.BoxboroughNews.org. We also publish a free weekly email newsletter. Subscribe at <https://www.boxboroughnews.org/subscribe>.

I-495 Route 111 Bridge Replacement

Stay informed – visit <https://www.boxborough-ma.gov/> under “Latest News” for MassDOT updates.

Littleton-Boxborough Watermain Project

Stay informed – visit <https://www.lelwd.com/boxborough-water-main/> for latest updates on the waterline project.

New to Boxborough? Welcome!

Visit <https://www.boxborough-ma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/5010/Boxborough-New-Resident-Quick-Reference-Guide-PDF> to find information about the town that you might want as a new Boxborough resident.

Boxborough Connects (MART Van)

The Boxborough Connects is proud to announce that ridership has increased steadily since its inception. The service has been an asset in assisting: one car households, children 10 or older with after school activities and seniors who choose not to drive. Boxborough Connects also makes multiple stops at the South Acton MBTA station for commuters. It also includes a dedicated stop at the Acton Food Pantry on Thursdays. The service runs Monday through Friday, from 7:30am to 7:00pm. The cost is a \$1 per passenger per ride.

For more information and schedule refer to this link: [//bit.ly/BoxboroughConnects](https://bit.ly/BoxboroughConnects)

Boxborough Connects is operated in collaboration with the Montachusett Regional Transit Authority (MART).



TOWN OF BOXBOROUGH

FALL TOWN MEETING

October 14, 2025 – October 15, 2025
7:00 PM

To either of the Constables of the Town of Boxborough, Greetings:

In the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, you are hereby required to notify all residents of the Town of Boxborough, who shall be qualified to vote in accordance with the provisions of MGL Chapter 51, Section 1, to meet at the Boxboro Regency, Parade Room, 242 Adams Place, Boxborough, MA starting on Tuesday, October 14, 2025 at 7:00 PM, to act on Articles 1 through 8 of this Fall Town Meeting Warrant.

ARTICLE 1 AMENDMENT TO CHANGE SECTION 4.1.3c UTILITY AND PUBLIC SERVICE USES AND ARTICLE 9.2 TERMS DEFINED OF THE TOWN OF BOXBOROUGH ZONING BYLAW

(Two-thirds Vote Required)

To see if the Town will vote to amend Section 4.1.3c UTILITY AND PUBLIC SERVICE USES (and accompanying footnotes) and Article 9.2 Terms Defined of the Town of Boxborough Zoning Bylaw for the purpose of allowing and defining a new use “Public Safety,” or take any action relative thereto. The changes are in bold:

4.1.3c UTILITY AND PUBLIC SERVICE USES

	AR	R1	B	B1	OP	TC	IC
Public Safety²⁶	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

FOOTNOTES

²⁶ **Use must be owned or operated by the Town of Boxborough. Site Plan approval required for any use per Section 2.5.2a of this Bylaw.**

9.2 Terms Defined

Public Safety shall mean any land, structure or structures owned or operated by the Town of Boxborough for police, fire and emergency medical services, or emergency management.

Summary:

Article 1 establishes a definition for Public Safety and a corresponding use code. Under this proposal, Public Safety uses operated by the Town would be allowed by right in every district. Footnote 26 is further included to emphasize the requirement for site plan approval by the Planning Board, prior to issuance of a building permit.

The Planning Board recommends (3-2-0).

Majority Opinion: The Planning Board recommends allowing Public Safety Facilities, “by right” in all zoning districts, subject to site plan review.

This article is significantly narrower than the one proposed at the last Town Meeting. Instead of permitting all municipal uses, which vary widely in intensity, it allows only Public Safety Facilities, and only after public hearings and a stringent site plan review process. At present, however, Public Safety Facilities are prohibited in all zoning districts due to an omission in the bylaws.

For the last 30 years, all municipal uses were permitted throughout Boxborough, and many municipal buildings have been constructed in or adjacent to commercial and residential zones. The current limitation exists only because of the inadvertent omission of a single definition in the zoning bylaws. In our deliberations, it also became evident that nearly all neighboring towns allow Public Safety Facilities in all zones, and many currently have such facilities coexisting directly alongside residential uses, without controversy.

Public Safety Facilities protect our health and safety, the very core of zoning and town governance. Allowing them in every district ensures maximum flexibility in site selection, cost management, and emergency responsiveness, thereby strengthening community safety. Zoning is not only about separating

incompatible uses; it is also about ensuring essential services are accessible where needed. Unlike commercial or industrial facilities, Public Safety Facilities serve the public welfare, not private profit, and are operated by the municipality, giving the community ultimate control.

Any adverse effects are foreseeable and can be managed through rigorous oversight. The site plan review process provides a public forum where residents and abutters can raise concerns about traffic, noise, lighting, and environmental impacts, all of which must be mitigated under established standards. Permitting requirements and oversight through site plan review, building codes, and other regulatory tools ensure that such facilities enhance, rather than harm, neighborhood character.

Zoning bylaws serve to protect communities from adverse impacts by requiring thoughtful, evidence-based regulation of land uses. Zoning's fundamental purpose is to safeguard public health and safety. Properly designed, sited, and vetted Public Safety Facilities are not "unintended consequences," but direct fulfillments of that purpose. Appropriate siting and modern regulatory standards ensure facilities are assets, not liabilities. Excluding such facilities from residential districts is not a requirement of good zoning; rather, it is a flaw. More than 75% of the land in Boxborough is either restricted/non-buildable or zoned Residential, severely limiting where necessary infrastructure can be built if restricted only to non-residential districts.

It is also important to note that zoning alone does not authorize construction of a facility. Any project or site proposed for such a facility must go through multiple other, very public, processes, such as site selection, design, property acquisition, and ultimately construction funding. Bonding would be required at each stage, bringing multiple articles before the Town for any large project. Bonding requires a two-thirds vote of Town Meeting followed by a majority vote at the ballot box at a town-wide election. Additional input and review would come from the Conservation Commission, Board of Health, Sustainability Committee, and other relevant town bodies. In short, zoning is only the first hurdle, not the last. The majority believes that the people of Boxborough should have the final decision on any Public Safety Facility, its design, location, and cost, not any single board. This article ensures that outcome.

Our zoning bylaws exist not only to shield neighborhoods from harm, but to enable the infrastructure that keeps our entire community safe and vibrant. Striking this balance is essential if zoning is to serve its true purpose: protecting residents while enabling the services that sustain them. Allowing Public Safety Facilities "by right" in all districts, with strong public oversight, expresses these fundamental principles, providing fair, effective protection for all. The majority believes that when it comes to Public Safety, no doors should be closed.

Minority Opinion: The Planning Board does not recommend this article as written. We recommend against allowing public safety facilities "by right" in the Agricultural and Residential ("AR" and "R1") zoning districts.

While we recognize and support the current need for a new fire station—and future public safety facilities—we believe such facilities should be permitted "by right" only in the town's business, commercial and industrial zoning districts or where such facilities already exist. Public safety facilities should be disallowed in the AR and R1 zoning districts.

Public safety buildings are inherently commercial and industrial in nature, often featuring large garages for multiple vehicles, including diesel trucks. They generate traffic, noise, lighting, and potentially contaminated wastewater, all of which require careful management.

These impacts make such facilities unsuitable for residential neighborhoods. Zoning exists to protect communities from unintended consequences. There are no facilities allowed by right in Boxborough's Use Regulations that are of an industrial or commercial nature in our AR and R1 zoning districts. This is by design to protect residents.

Fortunately, there is ample commercially and industrially-zoned land available that is centrally located, appropriate for future public safety facility development, and buffered from residents. Numerous sites have been identified that meet the Fire Station Building Committee's stated needs that are outside of the AR and R1 zoning districts.

If residents feel strongly that public safety facilities should be allowed in any part of town, we recommend that they be allowed in the AR and R1 districts only by Special Permit, issued by the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA), consistent with neighboring towns. This layer of additional oversight would ensure that any proposed facility "will not have adverse effects that outweigh the benefits to the town or its neighborhood," as required by Boxborough's zoning bylaw.

The Finance Committee recommends (7-0-0). *A yes vote for this article will allow the greatest flexibility for the Town to build the most efficient and cost-effective public safety buildings.* It should be noted that approval of this article does not mean automatic approval for a public safety building anywhere in town. The residents will have multiple opportunities to vote for any public safety project through town meeting votes and potential ballot questions for any debt exclusion. In addition, all projects would go through the rigorous site plan approval by the planning board.

The Fire Station Building Committee recommends (6-0-0). Based on the discussion FSBC members heard at the Planning Board hearings, the input from community members, and the need to allow for flexibility in selecting an appropriate and cost-effective site for the new fire station, the Fire Station Building Committee recommends this article, which would allow for facilities for public safety purposes, including structures used for police, fire, emergency medical services, or emergency management, to be permitted by right in all zoning districts within the Town of Boxborough.

The Select Board recommends (4-1-0).

Majority Opinion: The Select Board recommends permitting Public Safety facilities by right in all zoning districts, subject to site plan review. Public safety is a core service provided by the Town, directly impacting the health and safety of our residents. Allowing these facilities in every district gives the Town the flexibility to choose optimal locations that ensure rapid emergency response and long-term cost efficiency.

These facilities are subject to existing bylaws regulating noise, lighting, and wastewater management—often with stricter standards than those required in some agricultural or residential zones. This ensures any development is both safe and compliant.

Contrary to the belief that ample land is available in industrial zones which makes up of roughly 25% of Boxborough, only few parcels are available and many have limitations. If ample land were available, prior boards would have already identified and developed such a site for a new fire station—potentially saving significant costs over the past decade.

For improved emergency access, better site selection, and fiscal responsibility now and in the future, allowing Public Safety facilities by right across all zones is a practical and necessary step.

Minority Opinion: The minority of the Select Board does not recommend this article. I, Wes Fowlks, fully support the Planning Board's minority opinion and agree that public safety facilities should not be allowed by right in Agricultural and Residential zones. If this article were amended to show 'N' instead of 'Y' in the zoning table for both AR and R1 districts, I would support it without hesitation.

**ARTICLE 2 AMENDMENT TO CHANGE SECTION 5.1.2 DIMENSIONAL
SCHEDULE OF THE TOWN OF BOXBOROUGH ZONING
BYLAW**

(Two-thirds Vote Required)

To see if the Town will vote to amend Section 5.1.2 Dimensional Schedule, Footnote 5 of the Town of Boxborough Zoning Bylaw for the purpose of allowing a Public Safety building of up to 25,000 square feet in the Town Center District, or take any action relative thereto. The changes are in bold:

Section 5.1.2 Dimensional Schedule footnote 5 is modified as follows:

⁵ Maximum Building Size: No building shall exceed 8,000 square feet gross floor area. Notwithstanding the above, any building in excess of 8,000 square feet gross floor area, but less than 15,000 square feet gross floor area **(25,000 square feet for Public Safety buildings)** may be allowed by special permit of the Board of Appeals under Section 2.3 of this Bylaw.

Summary:

Article 2 addresses a pre-existing threshold for structure sizes in the Town Center District. Presently, the Town Center district allows structures to be built up to 8,000 square feet, or up to 15,000 square feet if the property owner receives a special permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals. This article would increase the allowable threshold to 25,000 square feet, exclusively for Public Safety facilities. A special permit would still be required to increase the building size beyond 8,000 square feet.

The Planning Board defers its recommendation to Town Meeting Floor. The Public Hearing for this article is scheduled after the printing of this warrant.

The Finance Committee recommends (6-0-0). The Finance Committee unanimously recommends.

The Fire Station Building Committee recommends (6-0-0). Based on the discussion FSBC members heard at the Planning Board hearings, the input from community members, and the need to allow for flexibility in selecting an appropriate and cost-effective site for the new fire station, the Fire Station Building Committee recommends this article. Currently parcels located at 750 and 832 Massachusetts Avenue are under consideration for a new fire station. These parcels fall under the size restriction currently in place, which would prohibit selection of that site. To keep the options open for the best location, we recommend this change in size allowance for a public safety building in the Town Center District.

The Select Board defers their recommendation until Town Meeting. This allows time to hear input from the public hearing and review final language from the Planning Board. We appreciate the hard work that goes into preparing Zoning Bylaw articles and thank the Planning Board for their hard work and diligence on behalf of the town.

ARTICLE 3 SENSE OF THE MEETING: UNDERSTANDING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCATION AND COST FOR BUILDING A NEW FIRE HOUSE

(Majority Vote Required – Non-Binding)

To see if it is the sense of the meeting to pay up to \$6 million more than the base cost to build a new fire house that is not located at 72 Stow Road, or take any other action related thereto.

Summary:

At the 2025 Annual Town Meeting, Boxborough voted against design funding for a fire house located at 72 Stow Road. In order to move forward and build a much needed fire house that: (1) meets the needs of Boxborough residents and its staff of Firefighter/EMT's, fulfilling the mission of fire suppression, emergency medical response and emergency management services; and (2) complies with the Massachusetts Building and Fire Code and National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards, the Fire Station Building Committee seeks to find out how the Town feels about cost differential versus location. This sense of the meeting article seeks to find the Town's desire to explore the design and construction of a new fire house that is not located at 72 Stow Road, and could cost up to \$6 million more due to site constraints.

The Fire Station Building Committee recommends (6-0-0). At this time, the FSBC is neutral about whether to pay up to \$6 million more for a fire station that is not located at 72 Stow Road. We understand the benefit of locating in an area that is not a neighborhood off of Massachusetts Avenue, but we also understand that it may cost the town up to \$6 million more to locate at one of the other proposed sites. This is on top of cost that is likely to be very expensive for the Town. This sense of the meeting will help give the FSBC direction about whether to move forward with a site on Massachusetts Avenue, if viable, despite incurring higher costs.

The Finance Committee does not recommend (0-6-0). The Finance Committee unanimously voted not to recommend this article. The Finance Committee concluded in light of the financial uncertainty with town and school budgets, spending an additional \$6 million on a Mass Ave location is not fiscally responsible. Especially if an efficient and cost-effective fire station can be built for less elsewhere, including but not limited to 72 Stow Rd.

The Capital Committee does not recommend (0-5-0). The Capital Committee voted unanimously against recommending this article because of the negative effect it may have on other critical items in the Capital Plan.

The Select Board makes no recommendation at this time. This is a non-binding, sense-of-the-meeting article intended to foster discussion and give the Fire Station Building Committee additional input into the site selection and design of our future fire station. The Select Board has not taken a formal position on this article and is very interested in hearing the discussion tonight. We truly appreciate the time and energy the Fire Station Building Committee has dedicated to listening to the questions and concerns of the community as well as continually providing updates and information.

ARTICLE 4 SENSE OF THE MEETING: BUILDING A NEW FIRE HOUSE USING HIGH-LEVEL “GREEN CONSTRUCTION” STANDARDS

(Majority Vote Required – Non-Binding)

To see if it is the sense of the meeting that the Town explore the design and construction of a new fire house using Green Construction standards that exceed current fire station building requirements, recognizing the opportunity to invest approximately \$1,000,000 in infrastructure that supports long-term operational savings, environmental stewardship, and community resilience, or take any other action related thereto.

Summary:

This article invites the Town to consider taking a future-focused approach to meeting the urgent need for a modern fire station, one that (1) supports the health and safety of Boxborough residents and its staff of Firefighter/EMT's, enabling effective fire suppression, emergency medical response and emergency management services; (2) meets or exceeds Massachusetts Building and Fire Code and National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards, and (3) positions Boxborough as a leader in sustainable municipal development. The Fire Station Building Committee seeks to find out how the Town feels about investing in a fire station with basic standards versus optional/non-code required “Green Construction” standards.

Basic Green Infrastructure components required by code include:

- *Efficient windows*
- *Efficient HVAC systems*
- *Air sealing and high levels of building insulation*
- *Efficient lighting and lighting controls systems*
- *Electric vehicle (EV) chargers*
- *Solar photovoltaic (PV) infrastructure*
- *Mass Save Fee for incentives*

Green Infrastructure components that exceed current code requirements include:

- *Geothermal HVAC systems*
- *Higher performing building components*
- *LEED program (consists of over 100 “points” available over 5 different categories of performance criteria designed to achieve a high performing and sustainable building).*
- *Potentially Being NetZero Energy Ready – ideally zero energy required on average to operate the building.*
- *Fossil Fuel Free – no fossil fuels required (no gas- or oil-fired equipment except for emergency generators)*
- *Design costs for the above*

This sense of the meeting article seeks to understand the Town's interest in investing approximately \$1 million in the fire station project to include green infrastructure that exceeds current code requirements to reflect Boxborough's values of long-term fiscal responsibility and sustainability.

The Fire Station Building Committee recommends (7-0-0). The Fire Station Building Committee understands the long-term benefits of building green infrastructure, but with the projected expense of the new fire station building, we are looking for input from the Town about whether we should consider investing in this additional expense to bring enhanced green infrastructure into the project during the design phase for long-term fiscal responsibility and sustainability. We recommend this because in our

forums we have heard the community support Green initiatives and it fits with the Town's commitment to Green Communities.

The Finance Committee recommends (4-2-0).

Majority Opinion: The majority of the Finance Committee recommends (4-2-0). The majority believes that the long-term benefits of Green Infrastructure will be positive and outweigh the cost. A yes vote will also reaffirm the town commitment to Green Communities.

Minority Opinion: With the current tight financial constraints an additional investment beyond current environmental standards cannot be justified.

The Capital Committee recommends (5-0-0). The Capital Committee recommends this article. While the return on investment of this is not yet known, we anticipate it will result in a positive, long-term fiscal benefit to the Town.

The Select Board recommends (5-0-0). This is the second non-binding, sense-of-the-meeting article on the warrant. Its purpose is to give voters the opportunity to share their views on whether Boxborough should build a new fire station to the current minimum energy code standards, or invest additional funds in green infrastructure that reflects our community's long-term values. We understand this could be a difficult decision for many people and appreciate your participation tonight.

The Select Board believes that investing now in energy-related infrastructure is both the financially prudent and ethically responsible choice, given what we know about climate change and Massachusetts' transition away from fossil fuels.

The new fire station is intended to serve the Town for the next 50 years. We are on the cusp of major changes in how energy is produced and consumed, and constructing a building of this importance to standards that could soon be obsolete would have serious ramifications for the community. By making thoughtful choices now, we can help prevent mechanical obsolescence, avoid the far greater cost of retrofitting the fire station in the future. We believe the practical way to measure our return on this investment is not only in short and long term financial savings but also in the broader benefits of reducing emissions, addressing climate change and strengthening community resilience.

The Sustainability Committee recommends (6-0-0). The Sustainability Committee recommends that the Town explore the option of a new fire house designed and built to Green Construction standards, with additional attention to consideration of wastewater management. We believe that pursuing high-performance and sustainable building practices is consistent with the Town's long-term environmental and financial goals. We have concerns about expressing the cost of evaluating Green Construction in dollars rather than as a percentage of the total cost of the project. We believe that it is important to explore the feasibility of the Green Construction options, especially the return on investment associated with Green Construction that goes above and beyond existing code requirements. Although Green Construction practices require an initial investment, over the lifetime of the building, this investment will reliably reduce operating costs, lower greenhouse gas emissions, and provide a healthy indoor environment for first responders, and safe environmental conditions for the Town. Investing in sustainability up front will help ensure that this critical public safety facility remains efficient, resilient, and cost-effective over its full life cycle.

ARTICLE 5 MBTA COMMUNITIES OVERLAY DISTRICT AND DEFINITIONS

(Majority Vote Required)

To see if the Town will vote to amend Article 8, Special Districts, by creating Section 8.5, MBTA Communities Overlay District, to read as follows, and further that non-substantive changes to the numbering of the Zoning Bylaw be permitted in order that it be in compliance with the numbering format of the Zoning Bylaw; or to take an action relative thereto:

8.5 MBTA Communities Multi-family Overlay District

8.5.1 Purpose. The purpose of the MBTA Communities Multi-family Overlay District (MCMOD) is to allow multi-family housing as of right in accordance with Section 3A of the Zoning Act (Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40A). This zoning provides for as of right multi-family housing to accomplish the following purposes:

- (a) Provide immediate access to rapid transit resources.
- (b) Promote a range of housing choices.
- (c) Increase opportunities for infrastructure improvements that would promote increased pedestrian access, mobility, and stormwater improvements.
- (d) Maintain and encourage appropriate massing and height of buildings that blend in and enhance the building elevations already in existence.

8.5.2 Establishment. This MCMOD is an overlay district having a land area of approximately 10.54 acres in size that is superimposed over the underlying zoning district(s) and is shown on the Zoning Map as Appendix E.

8.5.3 Applicability of MCMOD. An applicant may develop multi-family housing located within a MCMOD in accordance with the provisions of this Section 8.5.

8.5.4 Underlying Zoning. The MCMOD is an overlay district superimposed on underlying zoning districts. The regulations for use, dimension, and all other provisions of the Zoning Bylaw governing the respective underlying zoning district(s) shall remain in full force, except for uses allowed as of right or by special permit in the MCMOD. Uses that are not identified in Section 8.5 are governed by the requirements of the underlying zoning district(s).

8.5.5 Permitted Uses

(a) Uses Permitted as of Right. The following uses are permitted as of right within the MCMOD.

- 1) Multi-family housing, at a rate of no more than 13 units per acre.

8.5.6 Dimensional Regulations.

(a) Table of Dimensional Regulations. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this Zoning, the dimensional requirements applicable in the MCMOD are as follows:

Dimension	Unit
Minimum Lot Size	10,000 Sq Ft
Maximum Stories	2
Maximum Building Height	30 FT
Maximum Lot Coverage	60%
Minimum Open Space	40%
Front Yard Setback	40 Ft
Rear Yard Setback	30 Ft
Side Yard Setback	40 Ft

(b) Roof-Mounted Solar Energy Systems. Roof Mounted Solar Energy Systems are not subject to these dimensional regulations and shall be allowed in excess of the maximum building height.

8.5.7 Parking Requirements. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this Zoning, the parking requirements applicable in the MCMOD are as follows:

Vehicle Parking Spaces	1.5 Spaces/unit
Bicycle Parking Spaces	1 Spaces/unit
Electric Vehicle Spaces	0.2 Spaces/Vehicle Parking Space

(a) Bicycle storage. For a multi-family development of 10 units or more, covered parking bicycle parking spaces shall be integrated into the structure of the building(s).

8.5.8 Affordability Requirements.

A minimum of ten percent (10%) of the units in a multiple unit development subject to this Bylaw shall be established as affordable housing units constructed or rehabilitated in the MCMOD. Fractions of a dwelling unit shall be rounded down to the nearest whole number. In the event that the Town receives

approval by Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) of an Economic Feasibility Analysis which indicates feasibility of a higher affordability requirement, this requirement shall increase up to the maximum permitted by law.

8.5.9 Site Plan Review

(a) Applicability. Site Plan Approval under Article 2.5 is required for a project that proposes six (6) dwelling units or more.

(b) Review and Approval. An application for Site Plan Review shall be reviewed by the Planning Board for consistency with the purpose and intent of Article 2.5, Article 8.5, and Planning Board Rules and Regulations for Site Plan Approval.

(c) Design Review Board. The Design Review Board shall review applications for Site Plan Approval within the MCMOD and provide a written recommendation to the Planning Board prior to the close of the public hearing.

8.5.10 Severability. If any provision of this Section 8.5 is found to be invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remainder of Section 8.5 shall not be affected but shall remain in full force. The invalidity of any provision of this Section 8.5 shall not affect the validity of the remainder of the Boxborough Zoning Bylaw.

And further, amend Article 9 Definitions, Section 9.2 by inserting the following terms and definitions:

Area Median Income (AMI). The median family income for the metropolitan statistical region that includes the Town of Boxborough, Massachusetts, as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

As of right (also referred to as by-right). Development that may proceed under the Zoning in place at time of application without the need for a special permit, variance, zoning amendment, waiver, or other discretionary zoning approval. Development may still be subject to site-plan review.

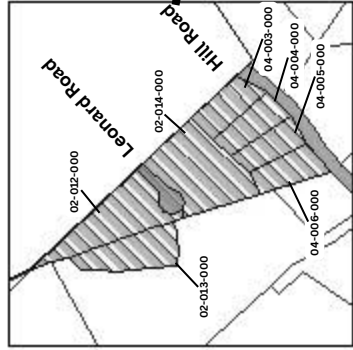
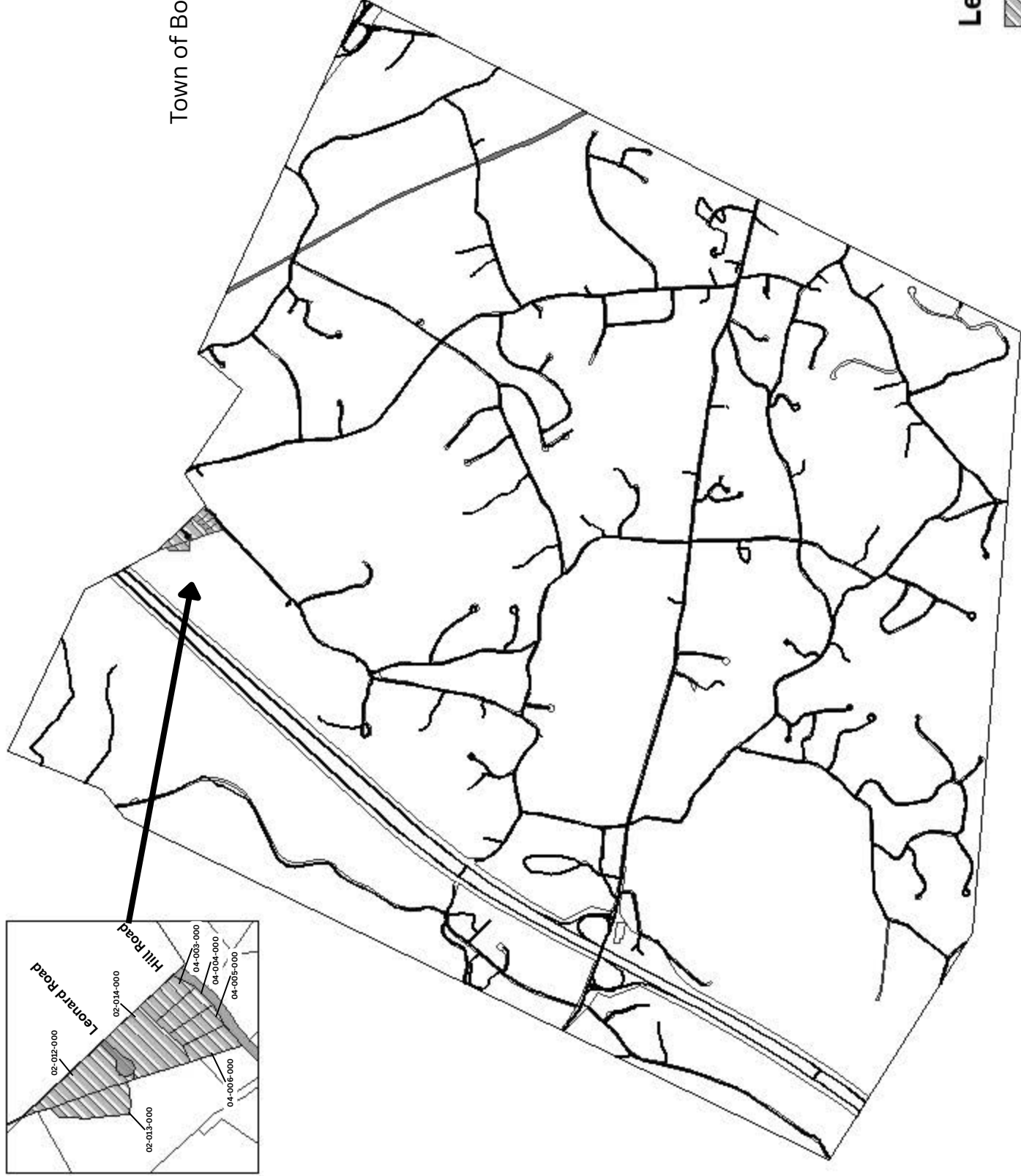
EOHLC. The Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities, or any successor agency.

MBTA. Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority.

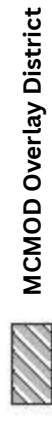
Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI). A list of qualified Affordable Housing Units maintained by EOHLC used to measure a community's stock of low-or moderate- income housing for the purposes of M.G.L. Chapter 40B, the Comprehensive Permit Law.



Town of Boxborough, Massachusetts



Legend



Summary:

This article provides the Town with a Zoning Overlay District that complies with the MBTA Communities Act of 2021. This Overlay District would allow multifamily housing by Site Plan Approval under Article 2.5 of the Zoning Bylaw. This proposal does not change the underlying zoning of these parcels, but provides a second set of zoning for property owners within the district boundaries. Strict conformance with the requirements herein would be required if a property owner chooses to leverage the proposed zoning district. Simple majority vote is required to pass this article, unlike a traditional zoning article which requires a 2/3 majority.

The Planning Board Recommends Unanimously (5-0). The Planning Board unanimously recommends passage of this bylaw, to comply with the MBTA Communities Act of 2021, and preserve access to state funding sources. This bylaw has been carefully crafted over a year's worth of planning and engagement. The Town Planner, consultants, a Town advisory group, and this Board collaborated across more than 20 meetings, three public hearings, and conducted several public engagement strategies. The Planning Board proposes this district, which leverages existing density with room for moderate increase over time. Should a landowner choose to make use of this overlay district, we propose dimensional regulations that allow multi-family in a more rural layout, and accounts for reduced parking requirements while encouraging other forms of sustainable transportation. Any reconstruction or new growth under this district will require contribution to the Town's subsidized housing inventory, preserving the Town's current percentage of affordable units. For these reasons, the Planning Board encourages Town Meeting to vote yes on this article.

The Finance Committee recommends (7-0-0). Finance Committee unanimously recommends. This article will ensure that the town meets the deadline set by the state to zone for the MBTA Community Overlay District, thus ensuring that we will not lose grants from the state. It is regrettable that the resulting overlay zoning, though fulfilling the legal requirement, does not necessarily uphold the spirit of the law. We hope that the town lead by the Select board and the Planning Board will continue to find ways to add to the Boxborough housing stock.

The Housing Board recommends (6-0-0). At its meeting of August 27, 2025, members of the Boxborough Housing Board (BHB) voted unanimously in support of the overlay district proposed in Article 1. While the BHB would prefer a recommendation in which more new homes were enabled by-right, we appreciate the constraints faced by the Planning Board in terms of bringing the town into compliance with the law. Although the current recommendation meets the "letter of the law," only a limited number of new homes have the potential of being created. However, the passage of Article 1 will simplify the construction of new housing units pursuant to any potential rebuild of the Meenmore Condominiums that presently occupy the proposed space. Further, this response by Boxborough to the requirements of the MBTA Communities Act, if accepted, will keep our town eligible for state grants. These grants, important to many Town departments, will assist the BHB with development of an update to our Housing Production Plan, and they will augment our program to preserve the existing affordable housing stock in Boxborough.

The Select Board recommends (5-0-0). The Select Board recommends this change to the zoning bylaw that would bring Boxborough into compliance with section 3A of the MBTA Communities Act. Section 3A requires each city and town served by the MBTA to create an overlay zoning district where multi-family housing is allowed by right.

The MBTA Communities Act was signed into law by Governor Baker in 2021 as part of a broader legislative package meant to curb the steeply increasing prices for housing in the region. It is incumbent

on each and every town in the Boston area to craft local solutions that are tailored to the specific attributes of the city or town, while serving the greater regional need. MBTA Communities Act compliance is an important part of Boxborough's contribution to the solution, and importantly, the proposed district is under a mile from the Littleton/I-495 Commuter Rail station, and from the Town of Littleton's multi-family overlay district.

While the Select Board supports the overlay district and the spirit of the MBTA Communities Act which it serves, it is important to emphasize that compliance ensures continued access to existing and emerging funding opportunities in the areas of development, public safety, conservation and recreation, and more. This aspect was compelling to members of the Select Board as they considered whether or not to weigh in on this article.

Additionally, this Select Board recommendation serves as an endorsement of the thorough, transparent, and inclusive public process led by the Town Planning Staff, the Planning Board, and the ad hoc advisory group convened specifically to dig in on this matter. Over the course of 20 hybrid meetings, a mapping forum, and a public survey, in addition to normal open Planning Board procedures, the crafters of this bylaw amendment heard from over 120 individuals over the course of the last year.

ARTICLE 6 AMENDMENT TO CHANGE SECTION 4 OF THE STONE WALLS BYLAW

(Majority Vote Required)

To see if the Town will vote to Amend Section 4 of the Boxborough Stone Walls Bylaw for the purpose of allowing temporary stone wall removal adequate to allow for necessary equipment and vehicle access to maintain the property. The deletions are struck through and changes are in bold:

Section 4: APPLICABILITY

Preservation of existing stone walls shall be exempt from review and approval by the Board. Prior written approval of the Board in accordance with the provisions of this Bylaw shall be required for:

4.1. The removal, tearing down, or destruction of stone walls or portions thereof within or on the boundary of any Town Way.

4.2. The construction of a new stone wall within or on the boundary of any Town Way.

Temporary (less than one (1) month) openings, no greater than ~~ten (10)~~ **fifteen (15)** feet in width in stone walls as defined above, are permitted upon written approval of the Town Planner which may be granted upon provision of a photograph of the portion of stone wall to be impacted, a written statement that the wall will be returned to its original state, and the posting of a \$1,000.00 bond with the Town. The bond so posted will be released upon inspection and approval by the Town Planner that the stone wall has been substantially returned to its initial state.

Summary:

This article increases the threshold from 10 to 15 feet, for openings in scenic stonewalls to be allowed by temporary removal permits. This allows the temporary removal of stonewalls in a more expeditious timeline then required for a public hearing. The Town Planner remains the approval authority for a temporary permit, which requires all work to be completed within 30 days of approval.

The Planning Board Recommends (5-0). The Planning Board unanimously recommends this minor change to allow an increase in the temporary (less than one month) removable of stonewalls along public ways from openings of ten (10) feet to fifteen (15) with the written approval of the Town Planner and posting of \$1,000 bond. The additional five (5) feet is needed to allow sufficient access for machinery and equipment that is customarily used in maintenance, repairs, construction, and similar activities. This will allow homeowners to proceed with most activities expeditiously without the need for presentation before and approval by the Planning Board. This will save homeowners and town staff time and resources for customary property maintenance, while encouraging compliance with the bylaw.

The Finance Committee recommends (7-0-0). The Finance Committee unanimously recommends.

ARTICLE 7 TO ESTABLISH AN APPOINTED BOARD OF ASSESSORS

(Majority Vote Required)

To see if the Town will vote to establish an appointed Board of Assessors consisting of three members, said members to be appointed by the Select Board for staggered three-year terms, with all the powers and duties of Boards of Assessors as set forth in the General Laws; such change to become effective upon approval by town meeting, subject to the requirements of G.L. c. 41, §24, or take any other action relative thereto.

Summary:

This article proposes to establish an appointed Board of Assessors. The appointment of assessors would be made by the Select Board, ensuring that candidates are selected based on qualifications and experience, and providing for more consistent oversight. The proposed board would consist of three appointed members, each serving a staggered three-year term. Under Massachusetts General Laws c. 41, §24, establishment of an appointed Board of Assessors requires approval by Town Meeting. The three-member Board of Assessors is to work with and enhance the professional Assessor on staff, and not replace that operational staff function. When appointing the first Board of Assessors, one member will be appointed for a one-year term, one member will be appointed for a two-year term, and one member will be appointed for a three-year term. Thereafter, members will be appointed by the Select Board for staggered three-year terms.

The Select Board recommends (5-0-0). The Select Board unanimously recommends this article. Right now, we have one person making all the critical decisions about property assessments that determine what every resident pays in taxes, which is a lot of responsibility and authority for any one single individual to hold without oversight. For example, without a Board of Assessors the Assessor can set the overlay reserve unilaterally, however if there was a Board of Assessors this would require the Assessor to get approval from the Board of Assessors before the money can be levied as taxes. Most of the towns around us recognized this years ago and moved to three-member boards of assessors because it creates better checks and balances, brings multiple perspectives to complex valuation decisions, and gives residents more confidence that assessment appeals are being heard fairly. This isn't about replacing our professional assessment staff as they will continue doing the technical and day to day work but rather creating a governance structure that provides proper oversight and accountability. When dealing with something as important as property taxes that affect every household in town, having three appointed board members review major decisions instead of leaving everything to one person is the only sensible path forward.

The Finance Committee recommends (7-0-0). The Finance Committee recommends this article. The Finance Committee believes that a Board of Assessors will provide improved oversight of critical financial decisions, which are currently the sole responsibility of the Town Assessor. A Board of Assessors will provide an additional layer of decision-making support and will provide greater confidence in the Town valuation process. Currently decisions that impact on taxes, specifically the amount of the Overlay Reserve, can be made by the Assessor without additional approval of any other boards or Town Meeting.

ARTICLE 8 AMENDMENT TO GENERAL BYLAW - DATE OF ANNUAL TOWN MEETING AND ANNUAL TOWN ELECTION

(Majority Vote Required)

To see if the Town will vote to amend the General Bylaws, Article 1, Section 1, by deleting the current section in its entirety, or take any other action relative thereto, which reads:

"The Annual Town Meeting for the election of town officers shall take place on the Tuesday following the third Monday in May of each year and that the Annual Meeting for the transaction of other business shall take place on the second Monday in May of each year."

and inserting in its place the following:

"The Annual Town Meeting for the transaction of all business other than the election of Town Officers shall customarily be held on the second Monday in May, and the Annual Town Meeting for the election of Town Officers shall customarily be held on the Tuesday following the third Monday in May.

If the Select Board determines that holding either session of the Annual Town Meeting on its customary date is impracticable due to unavailability of facilities or other significant conflict, the Select Board may, by vote, establish alternative dates. The business session shall be scheduled within the months of April, May, or June, and the election session shall be scheduled no later than the Tuesday following the third Monday in June, always held after the business session."

Summary:

This article would amend the General Bylaws to provide flexibility in scheduling both the Annual Town Meeting (business session) and the Annual Town Election (election session). Currently, the business session must be held on the second Monday in May, and the election must be held on the Tuesday following the third Monday in May. In 2026, the larger venue required to accommodate Town Meeting voters is not available on the bylaw-set date. This article authorizes the Select Board to schedule the Annual Town Meeting and Election on alternative dates within the spring months, ensuring that appropriate facilities are available while preserving the long-standing practice of holding these events in May.

The dates of the Annual Town Meeting shall be set not less than sixty (60) days prior to the opening of the Warrant and shall be publicly posted. For the year 2026, the Annual Town Meeting for the transaction of other business shall commence on Monday, May 18, 2026, at an alternative venue selected by the Select Board due to the need for expanded seating capacity. The meeting may continue on such additional nights as the meeting shall vote or the Moderator shall declare. The Annual Town Meeting for the election of Town Officers shall be held on Tuesday, June 2, 2026.

The Select Board recommends (5-0-0). The Select Board unanimously recommends this Article thereby amending the General Bylaws of the town to provide the Select Board the ability to alter the dates of the Annual Town Meeting and the Election of Town Officers to dates other than the 2nd Monday in May and 3rd Tuesday in May, in order to accommodate special circumstances in that current year only. These new dates for the events must be held by the 3rd Tuesday in June, as is the case this year 2026 due to a large anticipated attendance of residents attending Town meetings because of high impact decisions made by the residents. For a more detailed explanation, please see the above summary.

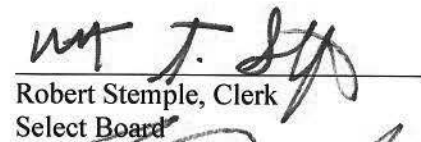
The Finance Committee recommends (6-0-0). The Finance Committee recommends this article for the reasons stated above.

You are required to serve this Fall Town Meeting Warrant by posting copies thereof, attested by you, at the Boxborough Town Hall, Albert J. Sargent Memorial Library, Boxborough Police Department, Boxborough Fire Department, and Blanchard Memorial School, fourteen days at least, before the time appointed for such meeting.

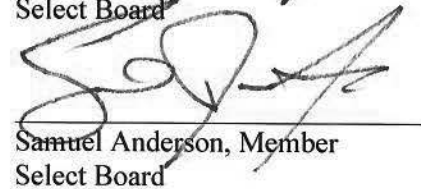
Hereof, fail not to deliver these warrants with your return of service thereon to the Town Clerk on or before September 30, 2025.



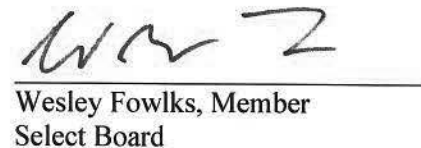
Kristin Hilberg, Chair
Select Board



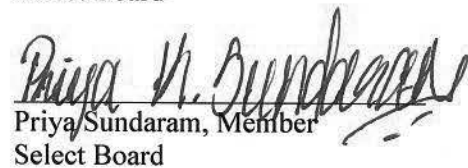
Robert Stemple, Clerk
Select Board



Samuel Anderson, Member
Select Board



Wesley Fowlks, Member
Select Board



Priya Sundaram, Member
Select Board

TOWN OF BOXBOROUGH TOWN MEETING - A GUIDE FOR RESIDENTS

On behalf of all the elected and appointed officials of the Town of Boxborough:

WELCOME TO TOWN MEETING.

This is your chance to make your voice heard and make your vote count.

Remember: YOU Are the Town Government.

What is Town Meeting?

Town Meeting is the foundation of Town Government, the purest form of direct democracy and fiscal responsibility. While the elected officials and appointed department heads supervise the day-to-day running of the town and schools, their authority extends only to managing employees and administering the expenditures that have already been voted by Town Meeting.

Boxborough has an Open Town Meeting form of government where each resident has the right to be heard in a respectful and civil fashion and each registered voter has the right to have their vote count. Open Town Meeting government is the best insurer of liberty by giving the primary power to the citizens. Attendance at Boxborough's Town Meetings runs around 150 to 200 voters out of approximately 4,000, while 200 legislators in the State House and Senate represent 7 million Massachusetts residents.

During a typical Town Meeting, voters approve the town's annual and supplemental budgets for schools and general government, vote on additional capital expenditures for equipment or buildings, authorize changes to zoning, land, or other town bylaws, approve compensation for employees and elected officials, acquire roads or parcels of land, and more.

Most of the money the town spends is generated from the local property tax. (Some comes from state aid or special funds.) Each spending decision made by Town Meeting has a direct effect on each voter's tax bill and on the quality of service the town provides for schools, highways, police and fire protection, conservation, recreation, library, etc. Town Meeting is the official convening of a legally constituted legislative body with power to make laws, levy taxes, and authorize expenditures.

When is Town Meeting?

Boxborough's Annual Town Meeting is usually held in May. The Annual Town Meeting includes the Town's annual operating budget for the fiscal year that begins on July 1st. Boxborough conducts a second "Special" Town Meeting typically during the fall to take up other business that may include current fiscal year budget expenditures and other items of interest not covered during the Annual Meeting.

What is the Warrant?

The warrant is the agenda for Town Meeting. Town Meeting does not come to an end until all the agenda items on the warrant articles have been decided: approved, defeated or no action deliberately taken. Only those articles of business that have been included in the warrant may be legally acted upon at Town Meeting. Warrants can vary in length, and the amount of debate on a given article can vary widely. No one can predict how many nights it will take to complete the business of any given Town Meeting, so this is a form of government that requires dedication by the citizens to see it to completion.

What about the Election?

Although it is held at a separate place and time, at Town Hall on the Tuesday in May after the Annual Town Meeting opens, the election is the part of Annual Town Meeting at which Town officials are elected. Some Town Meeting expenditures and sometimes other items require both an affirmative vote at Town Meeting as well as the passage of a ballot question. Tax and debt exclusion overrides are decided by election ballot. A debt exclusion exempts from the Prop. 2 1/2 limits the amounts borrowed for the duration of the loan; a capital outlay exclusion exempts the amount for a specific item, while an operating override raises the tax cap permanently.

Who Participates in Town Meeting?

Voters: Every registered voter in town is a legislator, with full power to participate in budgeting, allocation of funds and law-making. At Town Meeting the job of the voter is to listen, to ask questions, to offer arguments for or against a question, and to vote to decide each article on the warrant. Anyone who is not a registered voter of the Town of Boxborough is welcome to attend Town Meeting, but may not vote, and can address Town Meeting only with permission. Non-registered voters sit in their own section of the hall.

Moderator: The elected official who presides over Town Meeting and is responsible for its conduct consistent with bylaws and the parliamentary procedures defined in Town Meeting Time. [Town Meeting Time is a handbook of parliamentary law that is published by the Massachusetts Moderators Association and used by the vast preponderance of Massachusetts town meetings.] The Moderator has broad authority to accept parliamentary motions, regulate debate, and rule speakers in or out of order.

Town Clerk: The Town Clerk is the elected official responsible for maintaining town records, conducting elections, and recording the votes and actions taken at Town Meeting.

Town Counsel: A representative from KP | LAW, the firm providing legal services to the town, attends town meeting to offer advice as to the legality of proposed actions the town may be considering.

Finance Committee: This branch of town government is a standing committee appointed by the Moderator. They have authority to consider all municipal questions and make reports or recommendations to Town Meeting. The Finance Committee reviews every line item in each department's budget and submits the total budget. They recommend for or against each article on the warrant, based on their calculation of its impact on the tax rate, the town's financial position, and the spending priorities of the town. Their report is included with the Annual Town Meeting warrant. Each member of the Committee can speak and vote independently as a citizen.

Boxborough Select Board: Members of the Select Board have an important role before Town Meeting occurs. They prepare the warrant, obtain legal opinions where needed, make recommendations on specific articles, collect recommendations from other boards and committees, and cause the warrant to be mailed. At Town Meeting itself, their role is the same as other boards and committees. They will often make the main motion under an article, offer information, particularly through their appointed standing or ad hoc committees, or answer questions. Each member of the board can speak and vote independently as a citizen.

Boards and Committees: These elected and appointed boards have jurisdiction over various areas including schools, planning, zoning, conservation, recreation, library, and elder affairs. Their representatives will often offer the main motion on an article, give special presentations, or supply

information on articles being considered. Each member of a board or committee can speak and vote independently as a citizen.

Petitioners: Any ten voters have the right to petition the Select Board to put an article on the Annual Town Meeting warrant. This number increases to one hundred for a scheduled Special Town Meeting and to two hundred to petition the Board to call a Special Town Meeting. These petitioners will often offer the main motion on their article, give a presentation if desired, or supply information on the article. An article submitted by petition has the same status as other articles on the warrant. To insure the best possible outcome, petitioners should contact the Town Administrator, Town Moderator, and other impacted Town officials as far in advance of Town Meeting as possible to discuss article language and process.

What Happens at Town Meeting?

Articles are usually considered in the order in which they appear on the warrant. An article may be taken out of order by majority vote. Each article is taken up in a similar way.

Motion: First the Moderator asks for a motion concerning the article, and a motion is made, generally by the person who put the article on the warrant, recommending action to be taken on the article. The motion is then seconded. Voters should listen closely to the motion as stated since the vote and debate is on the motion which may be slightly different than the article as printed in the warrant. The mover then takes the floor and makes a presentation offering background on the article and reasons that it should be passed. The Moderator then asks for the recommendations on the article which are provided by the Finance Committee and other reporting committees.

Debate: Following the recommendations, debate is open. Voters must be recognized by the Moderator and clearly state their name and address before speaking. In most cases speakers are recognized using “alternating microphones” which may be labeled “yes” and “no”. Any registered voter may speak to an article, ask questions, voice comments or criticism, or offer information. With one exception, all speakers must be at microphones and cannot be interrupted by others. Remarks must be limited to the content of the article and be civil and respectful to others at the meeting. The mover remains available to answer questions but can also participate on the same basis as any other voter. Non-voters can speak with the permission of the Moderator and/or meeting members. Technically all comments are directed to the Town Meeting through the Moderator but this is observed more in the breach than reality in Boxborough. The only exception to interrupting a speaker or being recognized by the Moderator from the floor is for a voter to stand and raise a “point of order”.

Open and full debate is the hallmark of the New England Town Meeting. Most Massachusetts town meetings have formal or informal restrictions on how long and how often voters can speak on any article. Boxborough’s limitations are 10 minutes for a presenter and 3 minutes for a speaker. Brevity is a virtue and voters are encouraged to add new points to the debate rather than repeat what others have said. New speakers and new points of view are always encouraged. [Sometimes being over-long or repetitious can actually hurt a speaker’s case.] When no more debate is offered, or debate is ended by “Moving the Previous Question”, a vote is taken.

Voting: Most articles are decided by a simple majority. Some votes carry higher requirements, for example many zoning bylaw changes need a two-thirds majority. Decisions can be made by a voice vote, a show of hands, or having voters stand while they are counted by tellers. Very infrequently, votes are taken by paper ballot. The Moderator declares the outcome of a voice and/or show of hands vote. If seven (7) people question the outcome, then a count by tellers will be made.

Amendments: Amendments can be offered to any article being debated. To offer an amendment, a voter needs to give the text to the Town Clerk in writing on a special form before the amendment is made. The Moderator will then recognize the mover of the amendment, and the amendment will be debated and voted up or down before returning to debate on the article as a whole. “Amendments to amendments” are generally not allowed except for the personnel plan, the operating budget article, or to clarify the amendment. Further information regarding amendments may be found on the *Town of Boxborough Amendment Work Sheet*.

Consent Agenda: Articles on the Consent Agenda are exceptions to the general process of Town Meeting. In every Town Meeting warrant the Select Board, in consultation with Town Counsel, the Moderator and the Finance Committee, identify those articles they feel should generate no controversy and can be properly voted without debate. These articles are put on the Consent Agenda to allow motions under these articles to be acted upon as one unit and to be passed without debate.

At the call of the Consent Agenda, the Moderator will read out the numbers of the articles, one by one. If one or more voters object to any particular article being included in the Consent Agenda, they say “Hold” in a loud voice when the number is called. The article will then be removed automatically from the Consent Agenda and restored to its original place in the warrant, to be debated and voted upon in the usual manner. After the calling of the individual items in the Consent Agenda, the Moderator will ask for a motion that the voters pass all items remaining AS A UNIT on one vote. Use of the Consent Agenda process makes the Town Meeting more efficient by speeding up the handling of non-controversial items.

Operating Budget: The operating budget for the Town is somewhat different from other articles. This article is moved and presented by the Finance Committee and the Finance Committee may speak to individual line items. During debate, the elected or appointed officials or staff responsible for the various line items may also speak to their department’s budget. One note concerning the school budgets: while detail information may be presented in the warrant, by state law only the bottom line of the regional school assessment is voted by Town Meeting.

Quorum: There is no quorum required for any session of Town Meeting. So long as the Town Clerk is present, the Moderator can call a session to order at her/his discretion no matter how few voters are present, and the actions taken will be perfectly legal.

Reconsideration: Unless the Town Meeting votes to set rules otherwise, an article may be reconsidered on any night of the Town Meeting in which it was originally voted. The Town can vote to amend or defeat an article that has already passed, or re-vote and pass an article that was previously defeated. Each Town Meeting has the right to set its own rules on reconsideration for that meeting.

Selected Common Parliamentary Motions:

I move that this meeting be dissolved: This motion, if passed, ends the Town Meeting. It is in order only when all articles on the warrant have been disposed of in some way. It cannot be debated or amended and takes a simple majority.

I move to lay on the table: This motion, if passed, ends debate on the motion on the floor without any action. It cannot be debated or amended and takes a two-thirds majority to pass. If it passes, and Town Meeting ends without the motion being taken back off the table, the article is effectively defeated.

I move to take Article ____ off the table: This motion, if passed, brings an article back before Town Meeting for debate on the motion and action. It cannot be debated or amended and takes only a simple majority to pass.

I move the previous question: This motion, if passed, ends debate and forces an immediate vote on the article/amendment being debated. It cannot be debated or amended and takes a two-thirds majority to pass. If it fails, debate continues on the original item on the floor. Since this is a highly privileged motion, and a two-thirds vote is a high threshold, the Moderator will usually accept this motion unless it is extremely clear that both sides of an argument have not been heard.

I move that debate on the pending motion be limited to ____ minutes or ____ minutes per speaker: This motion, if passed, sets the clock ticking on a debate. It cannot be debated or amended and takes a two-thirds majority to pass. It can be undone by a motion to “**extend debate**” which is not debatable or amendable and also takes a two-thirds vote. [Note: this is a motion that has seldom, if ever, been used in Boxborough during the last 25 years.]

I move that the pending motion be amended by...: This motion, if passed, changes the content of the motion being debated. Once the motion to amend is made and seconded, debate ceases on the main motion until the motion to amend is voted up or down. The motion to amend can be debated, and takes a majority vote to pass no matter what vote is needed to pass the original motion.

I move reconsideration of Article ____: This motion, if passed, nullifies a previous vote of Town Meeting and brings a previously passed or defeated article back to the floor for debate a second time. This article can be debated, and cannot be amended. Unless the Town Meeting votes to set rules otherwise, in Boxborough it is always in order and takes a simple majority to pass. If the reconsideration article passes, it is as if the earlier debate and vote never took place.

Point of order: This is the one time that a speaker at a microphone can be interrupted from the floor. This is not really a motion at all but a question or comment, and thus cannot be debated or voted. The Moderator will immediately stop discussion, listen to the point of order and rule on it. Points of order could relate to the right of the speaker to the floor, the germaneness of the speaker’s comments to the article under consideration, proper procedure, conduct of a speaker, or an error on the part of the Moderator.

Selected Quotes:

“It has been said that democracy is the worst form of government except for all those other forms that have been tried from time to time.” Sir Winston Churchill, Speech in House of Commons 1947.

“We were all friends and neighbors before this meeting; after this meeting we will still be neighbors; hopefully we will still be friends.” Reginald C. (Reg) Brown, Boxborough Town Moderator 1977 to 2005.

“Civility at Town Meeting is not optional.” Various and sundry Town Moderators in Massachusetts.

Prepared by former Boxborough Moderator John Fallon with updates by current Boxborough Moderator Dennis Reip.

[illegible]

**Town of Boxborough
29 Middle Road
Boxborough, MA 01719**

**PRSRT-STD
ECRWSS
U.S. Postage Paid
Acton, MA
Permit No. 26**

**Postal Customer
Boxborough, MA 01719**



To learn more about Fall Town Meeting or to access the
warrant, please scan the QR code above
or visit the Boxborough Town website at:
<https://www.boxborough-ma.gov/507/Town-Meeting>